

Remarks

The Office Action mailed September 5, 2007 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-20 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-20 stand rejected.

The rejection of Claims 1-3, 8-10, 12, 14, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by King (U.S. Patent 5,127,410) is respectfully traversed.

King describes an ultrasonic transducer probe 10 for medical scanning and a lens assembly for use therein. The probe 10 includes a housing 21 in which an ultrasonic transducer array 16 is mounted. The housing 21 also includes an opening 23 that is adjacent to the transducer array 16. A first lens subassembly is mounted to the transducer 16 and moves with the transducer 16 when the transducer 16 is rotated. A second lens subassembly is mounted to the housing 21 to fill the opening 23. The second lens assembly includes a screen 29, a backing layer 27, and a film that fills an opening 24 formed in a first epoxy seal 22. The film that fills opening 24 is oriented to be positioned adjacent to a channel 12 defined in a body.

At page 2 of the Office Action the Examiner “interprets [the] hole filling second lens assembly to read upon ‘the ultrasonic transceiver unit extending through the opening.’” Accordingly, the Examiner interprets the ultrasonic transceiver 16 to include the second lens assembly. King describes the second lens assembly as including a screen 29, a backing layer 27, and a film that fills opening 24. (See Column 4, lines 30-45) Given this interpretation, Applicants respectfully submit that the second lens assembly forms the outer most portion of the ultrasonic transducer. Therefore, Applicants submit that King cannot describe a second partial enclosure that is integrally formed with the first partial enclosure *so as to cover the opening*. Rather, under such an interpretation the second lens assembly covers the opening. Further, the lenses 26 and 28 that are included within the first lens assembly are positioned adjacent to the second lens assembly of the ultrasonic transceiver 16. Accordingly,

Applicants submit that King cannot describe a second partial enclosure having an acoustic lens of the ultrasonic transceiver unit in contact therewith from inside the enclosure.

Claim 1 recites an ultrasonic probe comprising “an ultrasonic transceiver unit...an enclosure that encloses the unit, the enclosure comprising...a first partial enclosure formed of hard plastics having an opening at the tip, the ultrasonic transceiver unit extending through the opening...a second partial enclosure integrally formed with the first partial enclosure so as to cover the opening to extend from the tip, the second partial enclosure being formed of soft plastics and having an acoustic lens of the ultrasonic transceiver unit in contact therewith from inside the enclosure.”

King does not describe or suggest an ultrasonic probe as is recited in Claim 1. Specifically, King does not describe or suggest an ultrasonic probe that includes a second partial enclosure that is integrally formed with a first partial enclosure, so as to cover an opening, wherein the second partial enclosure has an acoustic lens of an ultrasonic transceiver unit that is in contact therewith from inside the enclosure. Rather, King describes a second lens assembly that covers an opening in an ultrasonic transducer housing. Moreover, King describes lenses that are housed within the transducer and, as such, do not contact a second partial enclosure. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over King.

Claims 2, 3, and 8-10 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2, 3, and 8-10 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claims 2, 3, and 8-10 likewise are patentable over King.

Claim 12 recites an enclosure for an ultrasonic transceiver unit, wherein the enclosure comprises “a first portion comprising a tip, the tip having an opening through which the ultrasonic transceiver unit extends...a second portion integrally formed with the first portion to cover the opening, the second portion having an inner surface in contact with an acoustic lens of the ultrasonic transceiver unit.”

King does not describe or suggest an enclosure for an ultrasonic transceiver unit as is recited in Claim 12. Specifically, King does not describe or suggest an enclosure for an

ultrasonic transceiver unit that includes a second portion that is integrally formed with a first portion to cover an opening, wherein the second portion has an inner surface that is in contact with an acoustic lens of the ultrasonic transceiver unit. Rather, King describes a second lens assembly that covers an opening in an ultrasonic transducer housing. Moreover, King describes lenses that are housed within the transducer and, as such, do not contact a second partial enclosure. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 12 is submitted to be patentable over King.

Claims 14 and 19 depend from independent Claim 12. When the recitations of Claims 14 and 19 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 12, Applicants submit that Claims 14 and 19 likewise are patentable over King.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1-3, 8-10, 12, 14, and 19 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 4-7, 11, 15-18, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over King in view of Silber (U.S. Patent 5,928,154) is respectfully traversed.

King is described above.

Silber describes a grip layer formed circumferentially around a substantial portion of an ultrasound probe housing. Specifically, Silber is cited for describing that the housing of the probe may be color-coded to facilitate identification of the type or model of the probe. The color-coding may also be used to designate a frequency of the probe.

Claims 4-7 and 11 depend from Claim 1, which is recited above.

Neither King nor Silber, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest an ultrasonic probe as is recited in Claim 1. Specifically, neither King nor Silber, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest an ultrasonic probe that includes a second partial enclosure that is integrally formed with a first partial enclosure, so as to cover an opening, wherein the second partial enclosure has an acoustic lens of an ultrasonic transceiver unit that is in contact therewith from inside the enclosure. Rather, King describes a second lens

assembly that covers an opening in an ultrasonic transducer housing. Moreover, King describes lenses that are housed within the transducer and, as such do not contact a second partial enclosure; and Silber merely describes a probe housing that may be color-coded to facilitate identification of the type or model of the probe. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over King in view of Silber.

Claims 4-7 and 11 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 4-7 and 11 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claims 4-7 and 11 likewise are patentable over King in view of Silber.

Claims 15-18 and 20 depend from Claim 12, which is recited above.

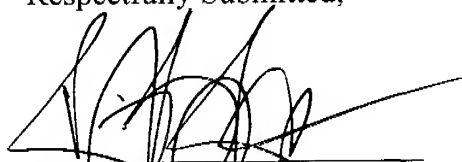
Neither King nor Silber, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest an enclosure for an ultrasonic transceiver unit as is recited in Claim 12. Specifically, neither King nor Silber, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest an enclosure for an ultrasonic transceiver unit that includes a second portion that is integrally formed with a first portion to cover an opening, wherein the second portion has an inner surface that is in contact with an acoustic lens of the ultrasonic transceiver unit. Rather, King describes a second lens assembly that covers an opening in an ultrasonic transducer housing. Moreover, King describes lenses that are housed within the transducer and, as such do not contact a second partial enclosure; and Silber merely describes a probe housing that may be color-coded to facilitate identification of the type or model of the probe. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 12 is submitted to be patentable over King in view of Silber.

Claims 15-18 and 20 depend from independent Claim 12. When the recitations of Claims 15-18 and 20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 12, Applicants submit that Claims 15-18 and 20 likewise are patentable over King in view of Silber.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 4-7, 11, 15-18, and 20 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert B. Reeser, III', written over a horizontal line.

Robert B. Reeser, III
Registration No. 45,548
ARMSTRONG TEASDALE LLP
One Metropolitan Square, Suite 2600
St. Louis, Missouri 63102-2740
(314) 621-5070